

THE PROVOST'S REPORT

September-October 2021

Volume 2 Issue 1

- A NOTE FROM THE PROVOST -

JUSTICE, EQUALITY, AND EDUCATION

In 1968, President Lyndon Johnson proclaimed September 15, 1968, as National Hispanic Heritage Week. In 1989 President George W.H. Bush, acknowledging the widespread contributions of Hispanics in the United States, designated September 15 – October 15 National Hispanic Heritage Month. September 15 is the anniversary of the Cry of Dolores (1810) which marked the start of the Mexican War of Independence with Spain. In 2021, Hispanic Heritage in the Americas is not only “local,” but international as several articles in this issue highlight.

The CUNY Immersion Language Program, instituted two decades ago, is offered at nine CUNY colleges. It is credited with helping tens of thousands of Spanish speakers learn and become proficient in English, a critical skill for success. Inside you'll find an Eyewitness News feature, the second of two, that aired October 10th on Channel 7. CLIP's

Associate Director and two former BCC students who used the program as a launchpad into highly successful careers are interviewed.



The Bronx community came together for a first-ever film festival, spearheaded by BCC's talented filmmakers, teachers and critics. The inaugural event spanned CUNY's three Bronx campuses—Hostos, Lehman and BCC—and included student and professional works. The films address humanity's cry and hope down through the ages: EQUALITY.

As you'll see, BCC continues to extend its good will and share academic gifts with Latin America colleges and was honored to celebrate 200 years of Independence for Costa Rica.

The many challenges and sorrows of the COVID pandemic continue, yet our commitment to our students at Bronx Community College remains fully engaged: To Transform Lives.

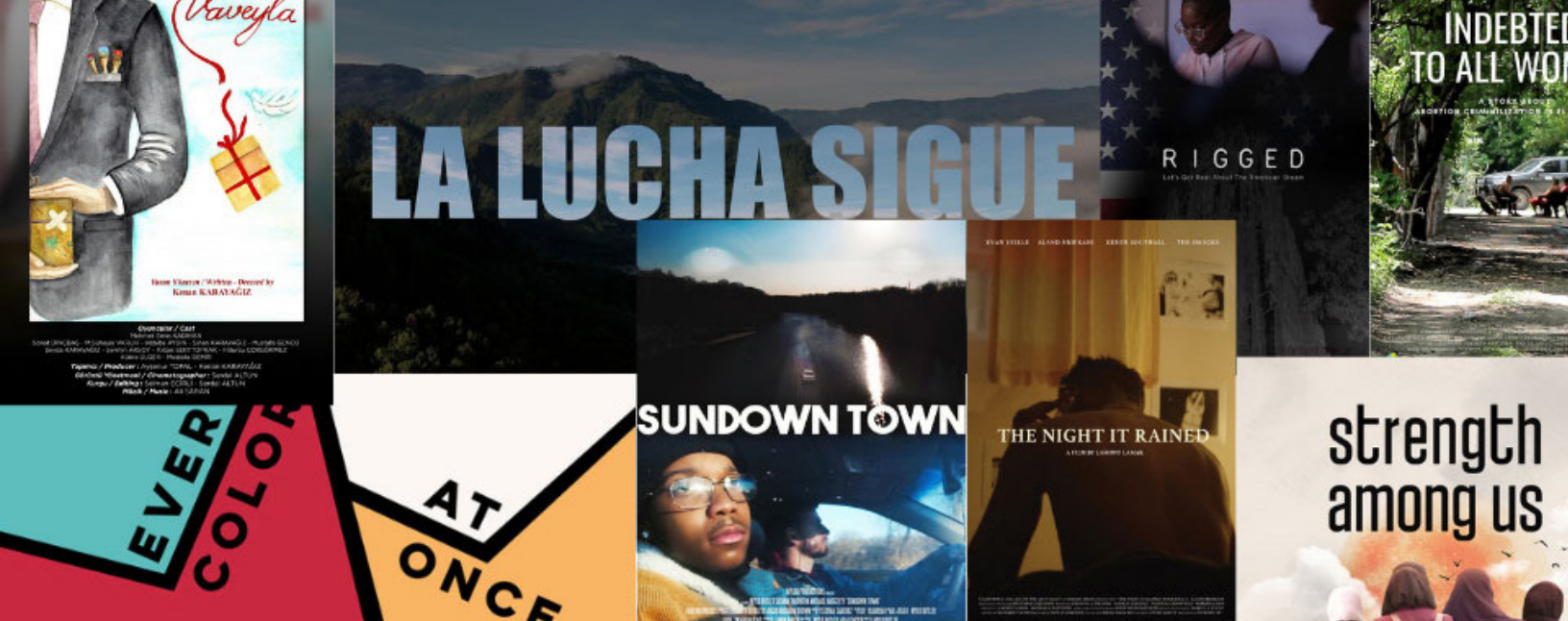


WELCOME BACK TO CAMPUS!

As always, my appreciation for your commitment to our students is unwavering.

“There is no thing as a single-issue struggle because we do not live single-issue lives.”

— Audre Lorde



BRONX SOCIAL JUSTICE MATTERS INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

From October 22nd to 25th, Bronx Community College, along with Lehman and Hostos Colleges, the United Nations Association of El Salvador and GLACO (Grupo Latinoamericano de Consules en New Jersey), launched the first Bronx Social Justice Matters Film Festival.

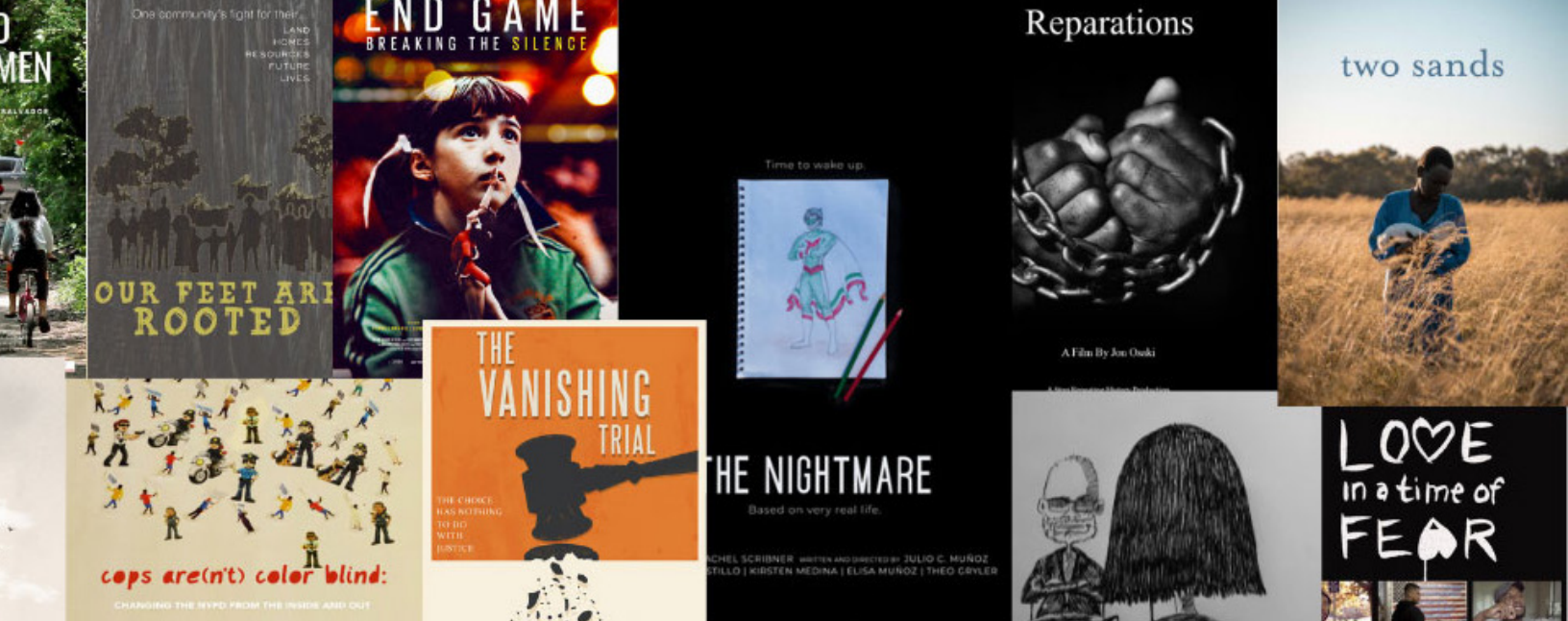
The event featured films from around the world devoted to a global culture of equality. Seventy films were submitted from across the United States and as far away as Australia. The seventeen chosen by a panel of eight judges (also from the US and the world) covered topics as varied and timely as sexual abuse in sports (End Game); racial inequality in higher education (Rigged); El Salvador's 20-40 year prison terms for abortion (Indebted to All Women); the plight of Syrian refugee women (Strength Among Us); the loss of one's day in court (The Vanishing Trial), along with astonishing student entries (Every Color at Once and Sundown Town), and many more.

Due to COVID 19, the festival was held virtually from Friday, October 22nd through Monday, October 25th. During that time, ticket holders streamed seventeen films at their convenience and attended live panels focusing on Social Justice Advocacy, as well "Ask the Filmmaker," discussions with film artists whose works were featured in the festival.

These films attest to the value, quality, passion and commitment of the filmmakers to highlight crucial issues of our time. The BCC Committee worked for over a year to organize the Bronx Social Justice Matters Film Festival.

Debra Gonsher
Irene Delgado
Richard Ginsburg
Sammy Henry
Manny Lopez
Luisa Martich
Luis Montenegro
Lester Sandres Rápalo
Angela Wambugu

Coordinator, Liberal Arts & Sciences AA
Vice-President for Student Success
Assistant VP of Communications and Marketing
Web Services Manager Developer
Associate Dean for Student Development
Deputy CIO, Information Technology
Dean of Academic Affairs
Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs
Assistant VP, Advancement-Development



Dr. Peter Nwosu
Dr. Charles Drago

Provost, Lehman College
Interim Provost, Hostos Community College

Professor Jeffrey Wisotsky, Communication Arts & Sciences, and Dr. Debra Gonsher served as two of the judges.

Elizabeth Payamps, Founder and Director of Future Now, served on a panel

Popular Bank, and Bronx Pro, sponsored the event.

On Sunday, the winners and prizes in four categories were announced:

First Place in the Student Category for the film: ***Every Color at Once*** -- **Caleb Phillip James and Anya Potter**: Certificate and \$500 cash award.

First Place in the Documentary Short Category: ***The Vanishing Trial*** -- **Wynette Yao**: Certificate and \$500 cash award.

First Place in the Narrative Short Category: ***Two Sands***-- **Poppy Van Oorde Grainger and David Kucha**: Certificate and \$500 cash award. (from Australia)

First Place in the Feature Length Documentary Category: ***Indebted to All Women*** -- **Maria Lobo and Roi Guitian**: Certificate and \$1000 cash award. (from Spain).

The 2nd Annual Bronx Social Justice Matters International Film Festival will be hosted by BCC.

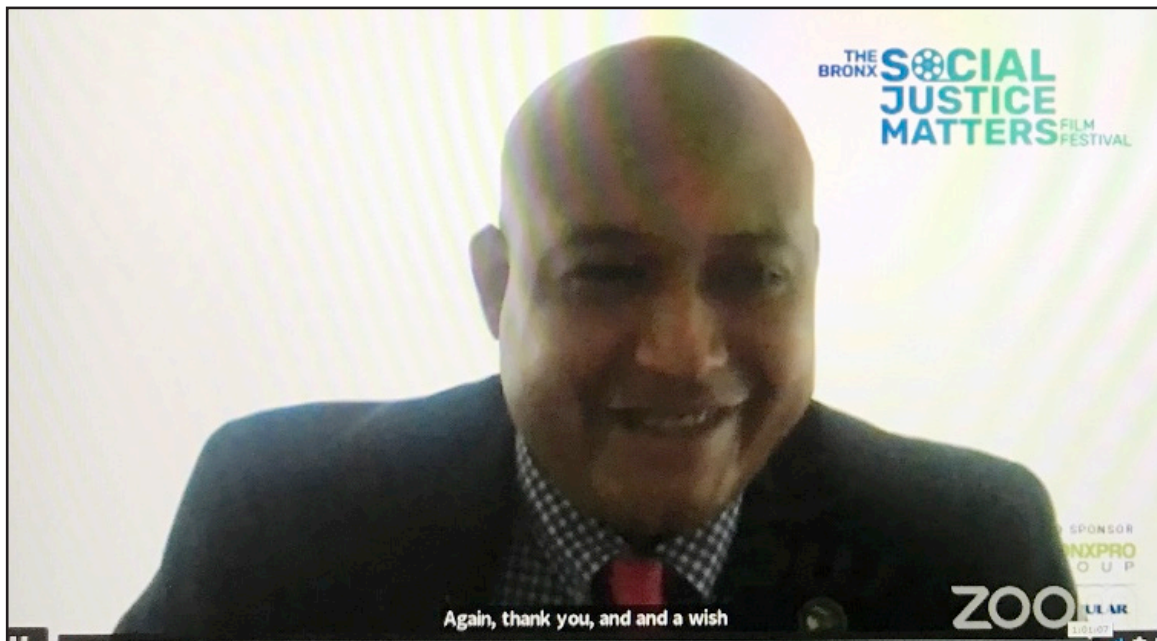
Complete film list: <https://www.bcc.cuny.edu/bronx-social-justice-matters-film-festival/>

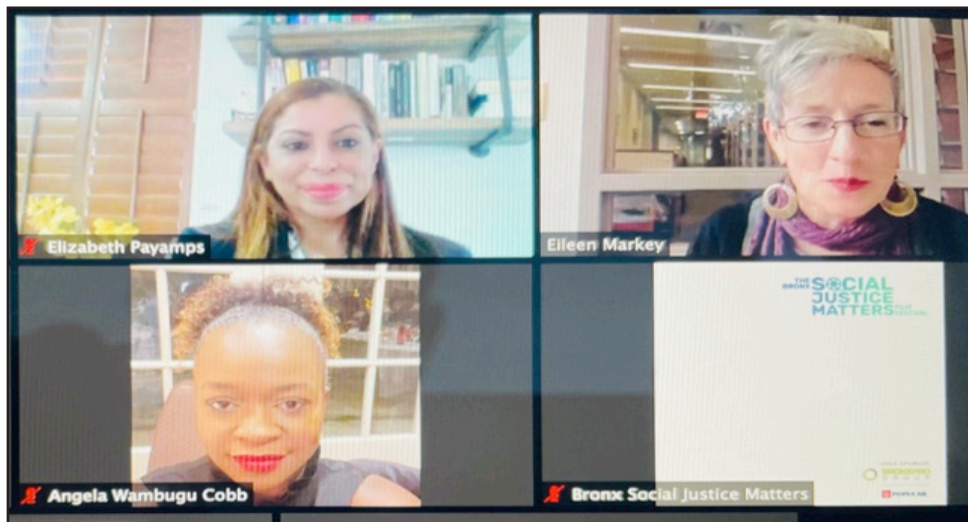
https://twitter.com/bronx_film

<https://www.instagram.com/bronxsocialjusticemattersfilm/>

<https://www.facebook.com/BronxSocialJusticeMattersFilmFestival> #BSJMFilmFestival
#BSJMFilmFestival

For information on any aspect of the festival, please reach out to Debra.Gonsher@bcc.cuny.edu





INSTITUTO TECNOLÓGICO UNIVERSITARIO RUMINAHUI

BCC President Thomas A Isekenegbe and President Angel Huerta of the Instituto Tecnológico Universitario Ruminahui, Ecuador recently signed an agreement on developing academic cooperation between the two colleges and countries. Vice-President for Academic Affairs Lester S. Rápalo described the news as “exciting,” and an opportunity for future collaboration. VP Rápalo extended his thanks to President Rodrigo Benitez, General Consul of Ecuador in New York and President Huerta. *Adelante!*



COSTA RICA INDEPENDENCE DAY - 200 YEAR CELEBRATION

(Following Spain's defeat in the Mexican War of Independence, Costa Rica, along with the rest of Central America, was granted its independence from Spain on September 15th, 1821.)

VP for Academic Affairs & Provost Lester Sandres Rápalo was invited to the General Council of Costa Rica on 9/15/2021 to commemorate the 200 years of independence. Pictured with the Provost are Jessica Canahuati, General Council of Honduras in New York, and Ronaldo Madrigal, General Council of Costa Rica in New York.



CONNECTION!

Inspire, Motivate and Empower

MISSION: “Mentor U Connect is a New Jersey-based non-profit organization that seeks to empower students (high school and college) with both the academic and social-emotional skills necessary to succeed in college and beyond” (MU Connect website).

Mentor U Connect assists students in the practical day-to-day aids to be successful, including note-taking methods, test strategies, study and skills workshops, as well as extending to the “community, human, financial, cultural and physical factors” to enhance students’ social lives, and, overall, to help students develop the resources, skills, and determination to “navigate the challenges and opportunities of college and professional development.”

BCC Provost Lester S. Rápalo serves in Mentor Chats, a Mentor U Connect committee made up of successful professionals who assist students and recent graduates in career exploration, networking, and professional trajectories. Mentor Chats recently received a New Jersey State Governor’s Jefferson award. The “Jefferson Awards is a national volunteer recognition program established in 1972 by the American Institute for Public Service in cooperation with the US Senate and the White House.” The Awards’ motto: “Honoring Those Who Multiply Good.” (njgovernorsawards.com.)

THE PROVOST ON SOCIAL MEDIA



<https://twitter.com/DrLRapalo> | @ DrLRapalo

BCC COMMUNITY CLEAN-UP



FORMER BCC STUDENTS: SUCCESS BEGAN WITH CLIP PROGRAM

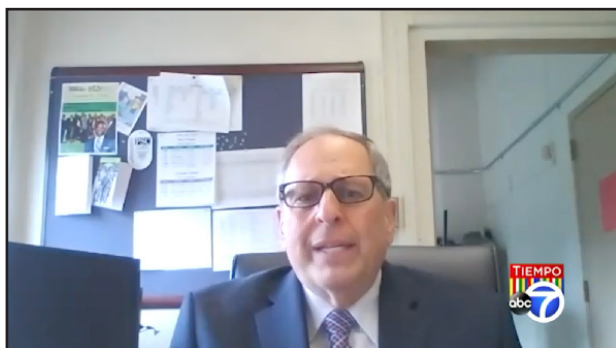
In celebration of Spanish Heritage Month, Joe Torres, known for his street reporting for Tiempo on Channel 7, made two trips in the past month BCC (one virtually) with the Eyewitness News Team to hear and learn about our CUNY Immersion Language Program. CLIP is a low-cost, pre-matriculation English as a Second Language (ESL) program. Normally, classes meet five hours a day, five days a week, and is specifically designed for “CUNY students who need to improve their academic English skills before taking college courses” (CUNY website).

The program at Bronx Community College has approximately 150 students enrolled each year. Jason Davis, Associate Director CUNY Language Immersion Program, and two CLIP graduates were recently interviewed by Joe Torres. Luz Rosado graduated CLIP in 2002. She went on to graduate BCC and later Baruch College. She is now a Senior Vice President for wealth management at Merrill Lynch.

Arnie Pineda graduated CLIP in 2005. He went on to graduate from BCC, Lehman College, and completed a master’s degree in Technology Management at Columbia and works in the technology field.

CLIP segment begins at 10:30 into the video. (Note: There are ads between segments.)

<https://abc7ny.com/tiempo-joe-torres-hispanic-diversity-esl-classes/11103809/>



FACULTY & STAFF: SCHOLARSHIP, CREATIVE WORKS, PRESENTATIONS

Nancy Ritze

(Dean for Research, Planning & Assessment)

Published: Book Chapter (Co-Author): *"Do We Have It? Do We Do It? Does It Work?": A Three-Question Framework for Addressing Accreditation Standards and Ensuring Institutional Effectiveness.* In *Exemplars for Assessment in Higher Education: Diverse Approaches to Addressing Accreditation Standards*. Middle States Commission on Higher Education: Philadelphia, 2021.

Participated in accompanying webinar: [Exemplars of Assessment in Higher Education Panel Discussion - Middle States Commission on Higher Education \(msche.org\)](https://www.msche.org/).

Cynthia Tobar

(Librarian, Head of BCC Archives)

Published: "Cities for People, Not for Profit: Gentrification and Housing Justice in Bushwick." *US Latina & Latino Oral History Journal* (2021): 5: 94-109; University of Texas Press. <https://www.utexaspressjournals.org/loi/ohj>

Published: Book Chapter: "Create, Transform, and Connect: Fostering Arts-Based Community Partnership at Bronx Community College's Archives." In *The Teaching with Primary Sources Cookbook*. C. Porterfield, J. (Ed), Chicago: ACRL Publications. (2021)

Presented: "For Us, By Us: Community Care and Power in Socially Engaged Art" for "Activism Roundtable: Fall Arts Festival," Adelphi University, 6 October 2021.

Awarded: Spring 2021 Activism award, sponsored by *Sing for Hope: Creating a Better World Through the Arts* for her collaborative oral history project *¿Dónde puedo ir? Searching for Home*, with composer and guitarist Luis D'Elias. This award is part of ARTIVISM: The Power of Art for Social Transformation event series at Adelphi University bringing "to light how the arts can redress inequities, reflect the voices of all and push society forward." Sing for Hope:

https://singforhope.org/?gclid=CjwKCAjwtfqKBhBoEiwAZuesiHR_Q0yn3uZP1Vg5fjFWK06RG4BrW-4ZY1QZM3m940BuobC8YHRr6KxoCS1IQAvD_BwE

Fellowship: Professor Tobar was selected as a Social Practice CUNY 2021-2022 Faculty Fellow for her latest project *American Icons*. The art project addresses the mythology behind the national anthem and public art in defining nationality and nationhood. A music composition by composer Nathaniel LaNasa will accompany Professor Tobar's oral history interviews of Bronx residents. The project will include a public music performance on BCC campus in May 2022, pending CDC regulations. <https://socialpracticecuny.org/people/>



ACADEMIC AFFAIRS AND STUDENT SUCCESS

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THE PROVOST'S REPORT

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THE LGBTQI+ RESOURCE ROOM PRESENTS CREATING YOUR OWN SAFE SPACE: Asserting your LGBTQI+ Identity on Campus



WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 10, 2021

Visit

<https://rb.gy/zojqo5>
for Zoom Information

STUDENT SESSION: 12:00 TO 1:30 P.M.

No two coming out stories are the same. Your individual coming out will be shaped by the supports you have at home, in your community, and at BCC.

Coming out on a predominantly heteronormative and cisnormative college campus can be challenging. To stay healthy, it's important to discover what helps you feel cared for, safe, and able to cope. Prioritizing your mental and physical health is key to self-care.

Creating Your Own Safe Space: Asserting your LGBTQI+ Identity on Campus will explore how students can assert their respective identities at BCC.

Learning Outcomes

Students who participate in Creating Your Own Safe Space: Asserting your LGBTQI+ Identity on Campus will learn:

- The process of coming out.
- How to communicate LGBTQI+ identity to faculty and fellow students.
- Campus rights.

FACULTY AND STAFF SESSION: 3:30 P.M. TO 5:00 P.M.

When individuals can bring their authentic selves to the workplace, they are more productive and engaged. Research shows that coming out increases job satisfaction. Therefore, many businesses are providing workplace protections for LGBTQI+ individuals. And yet, many are still reluctant to come out at work. A Human Rights Campaign Foundation study found that 46% of LGBTQI+ workers in the U.S. have not come out at work, largely due to the fear of social exclusion.

The LGBTQI+ community and their workplace experiences are diverse. Therefore, coming out is not the same for everyone.

Creating Your Own Safe Space: Asserting your LGBTQI+ Identity on Campus will explore how faculty and staff can assert their respective identities at BCC.

Learning Outcomes

Faculty and staff who participate in Creating Your Own Safe Space: Asserting your LGBTQI+ Identity on Campus will:

- Learn ways to come out to colleagues.
- Learn ways to come out to students.
- Explore creating a community on campus.

**Note: Please send notices of faculty & staff publications, presentations and creative work to
Richard.LaManna@bcc.cuny.edu**

Work must have been published or presented in the last 3 months. Next issue deadline: December 3, 2021.